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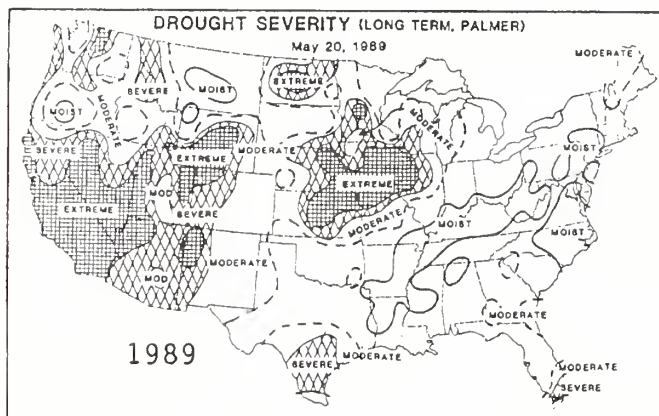
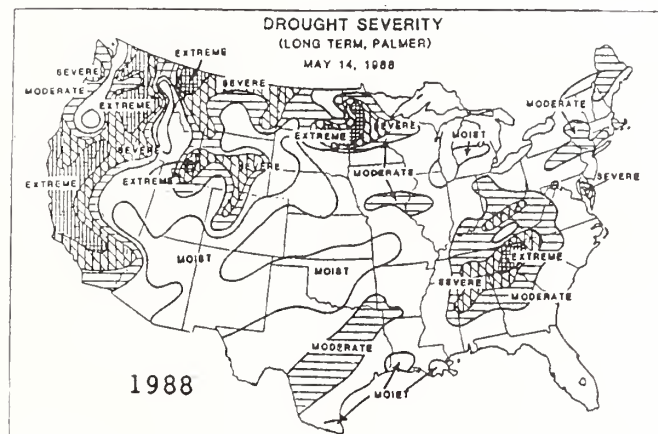
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# Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Information Radio-Television Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2414

May 26, 1989



DROUGHT SEVERITY -- Compare the severity of this year's drought with last year's. The map on the left shows drought severity on May 14, 1988. On the right, the May 20, 1989, chart. (Source: NOAA/USDA Joint Agricultural Weather Facility.)

USDA'S CHIEF METEOROLOGIST Norton Strommen does not foresee a recurrence of 1988's crop losses in 1989. "The weather patterns are very different from last year," he said. "We've had some timely rains in the Corn Belt, which should start this year's crop quickly. The impact of the recent rainfall in winter wheat areas will depend, in part, on weather conditions in the days ahead." Water shortages may continue into 1990, however, in areas such as southern Iowa. USDA Radio & TV will continue broadcasting drought information as long as it's news. Contact: Norton Strommen (202) 447-9305.

USDA WILL SURVEY 117,000 farmers and ranchers June 1 - 15 to assess 1989 crop and livestock production and inventories of the nation's farms and ranches. The June ag survey by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service is the first and largest of a series done throughout the year. Data gathered in June will be analyzed and released by USDA's Agricultural Statistics Board. Other ag surveys are scheduled for September, December and March. Contact: Larry Beard (202) 447-5394.

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YEUTTER GAINS MORE SENIOR OFFICIALS -- Sec. Clayton Yeutter's staff is beginning to fill out with these recent confirmations and announcements:

-- Franklin E. (Gene) Bailey, 39, a native of Phenix, Va., was sworn in as USDA assistant secretary of agriculture for congressional affairs May 18. Bailey was confirmed by the U.S. Senate May 17. Since 1987, Bailey had been government relations representative for the National Cotton Council of America in Washington.

-- Jo Ann Smith, a Florida rancher, was sworn in as assistant secretary of agriculture for marketing and inspection services May 18. She was confirmed by the U.S. Senate May 17. In 1985, Smith became the first female president of the National Cattlemen's Association.

-- Roland R. Vautour will remain in his post as under secretary of agriculture for small community and rural development, President George Bush announced May 17. Vautour, a native of New Hampshire, was originally named to this post June 23, 1987.

-- Alan Raul, 34, a native New Yorker with degrees from Harvard and Yale, was sworn in as general counsel for USDA May 22. Raul was confirmed by the U.S. Senate May 18. For the past year, Raul had been general counsel of the Office of Management and Budget. He served as associate counsel to President Ronald Reagan from 1986 to 1988.

-- Charles E. Hess, formerly dean of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences at the University of California, Davis, was sworn in as assistant secretary of agriculture for science and education May 22. Hess was confirmed by the U.S. Senate May 18. At Davis, Hess was also director of programs for the division of agriculture and natural resources at the California Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service.

AG EXPORTS NEAR RECORD LEVELS -- For the first time since March 1981, U.S. agricultural exports totaled more than \$4 billion in March 1989. Export volume for March was 15.3 million metric tons, up from the 14.9 million tons exported a year ago. Grain, feed and livestock products led the way. "Several factors contributed to the increase," Sec. Clayton Yeutter said, "including more competitive U.S. prices ... limited supplies from other major exporting countries, growth in the world economy and large grain purchases from major U.S. customers."

USDA WITHDRAWS MEAT INSPECTION PLAN -- USDA announced May 19 it would withdraw a proposal to reduce the number of federal inspections at major meat processing plants. After proposing the plan in November, USDA received more than 1,800 comments; most opposed the plan, at least in part. Contact: Pat Drayne (202) 447-7608.

USDA TO EXPAND LISTERIA TESTING -- USDA announced May 22 it will expand testing for the bacteria *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat meat and poultry products. The new policy will take effect in about six weeks. The policy follows the Centers for Disease Control confirming on April 14 the first case of human listeriosis in the U.S. caused by meat or poultry. *Listeria* is difficult to control because it can grow slowly on foods under refrigeration. Contact: Susan Rehe (202) 447-9113.

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1668 -- USDA's biggest farm survey is done during June. On this edition of AGRICULTURE USA, Dave Carter talks with USDA's chief statistician and others about the importance of this survey. (Weekly 13-1/2 min. documentary)

AGRITAPE #1657 -- USDA News Highlights; drought update; USDA's June farm survey; options of failed acres; western water woes. (Weekly reel of news features)

CONSUMER TIME #1150 -- Preventing *Listeria* food poisoning; consumer concern about Alar; more "greenhouse" evidence; low cholesterol eggs; new nutrient levels in eggs. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 - 3 min. features)

USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Tuesday, June 6, weekly weather & crop report; Wednesday, June 7, horticultural exports; Monday, June 12, U.S. crop production, Soviet grain outlook, world ag supply & demand; Tuesday, June 13, weekly weather & crop update, world ag/grain production, world oilseed situation, world cotton situation.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.  
Material changed at 5 p.m. EDT each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

AGRICULTURAL UPDATE and USDA NEWS SERVICE are available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY . . . . . 7:30-7:45 p.m., EDT, Transponder 12D

SATURDAY . . . . . 10:30-11:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 10D

MONDAY . . . . . 8:30-9:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 12D  
(Repeat of Saturday transmission)

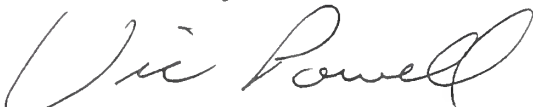
OFF MIKE

GOVERNOR...of Missouri, John Ashcroft, presented a citation to Mike Wiles (KIIS, Springfield, Mo.) for service in bringing public attention to the state's Agri-Missouri program, which promotes agricultural products grown in the "Show Me" state. Presentation opened the south-central regional meeting of the National Association of Farm Broadcasters, May 19-21. Thanks for a great meeting program go to Mike, who served as host, regional V.P. Curt Lancaster, and all who helped. BIGGEST...fish at the south-east regional NAFB meeting was caught by Mary Ketelsen, wife of Lynn Ketelsen (Linder Farm Network, Willmar, Minn.). Eric Parsons (USDA-ASCS) says the Alabama Gulf Shores Resort chef prepared and served the king mackrel at lunch. Eric remembers this because he caught the smallest fish. Says congratulations go to regional V.P. Jerry Gehman (WASG, Atmore, Ala.) and crew for an excellent meeting.

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Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

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TURNED...the crop under says Bob Cockrum (Texas Agribusiness Network, Dallas) about several wheat producers in his area. Says sufficient hay and water for livestock are serious problems. CONGRATULATIONS...to Roland Brooks (Cooperative Extension Service, Athens, Ga.) for 28 years providing extension radio news, and to Norton Strommen (USDA chief meteorologist) for weather analysis during the 1988 drought. They will each receive a USDA individual Distinguished Service Award. And to Dave Carter (USDA-EMS) who will receive an individual Superior Service Award for creativity in radio and TV programs. Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter will present the awards June 7 during USDA's 43rd annual honors award ceremony in Washington, D.C.



VIC POWELL, Chief, Radio & TV Division